



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana

VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 4 • Jan. 28, 2011



## IM Weekly Highlights



- On Jan. 26, the IM received a letter of support from the Governor's office on behalf of six state agencies to assist with ongoing deployment and operation of a statewide interoperable communications system. The supporting agencies are the Departments of Administration; Corrections; Fish, Wildlife and Parks; Livestock, Natural Resources and Conservation; and Transportation.
- A separate commitment also was received from General Walsh on behalf of the Dept. of Military Affairs. In return, the agencies will be allowed to add radios to the IM system based on business needs and system availability.
- Currently, the IM has obtained 15 commitments from counties/tribes with another 4 that are in the approval process. The IM Executive Director continues to inform local, state, tribal and federal government representatives regarding IM Project progress and sustainability needs.

## IMPD Solicits Officer Nominations

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

At the IM Project Directors (IMPD) meeting on Tues., Feb. 15, board members will be electing a new Chair, First Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair. George Gupton, Mineral County DES and IM Staffing Sub-Committee Chair, is accepting nominations for these positions, which are due no later than the morning of Feb. 15.

***Nominations are due no later than the morning of Feb. 15***

According to the IM policy for election of officers, candidates who want to serve as executive officers do not necessarily have to be a project director or a state agency board member. Individuals from local jurisdictions who are participating members of an IM standing committee or sub-committee also may be nominated. Or, the nominee may be a county/tribal elected official or a director, deputy director or division administrator of a state agency.

In addition, any consortium or local jurisdiction who submits a nominee must have a current Inter

Local Agreement signed by the local jurisdiction's county commission or tribal council.

George Gupton may be contacted via e-mail at [mincodes@blackfoot.net](mailto:mincodes@blackfoot.net) or by calling (406) 240-9395. You are urged to submit nominations as soon as possible.

## IM Technical Committee Elects New Officers

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

IM Technical Committee (IMTC) members elected a new Chair and Vice Chair at their Mon., Jan. 24 meeting in Helena. Jason Norman, the current Acting Chair, is stepping down because of a change in job duties. Members elected Kerry O'Connell,

***Members elected Kerry O'Connell, Gallatin County, as the committee's new Chair and Charlie Gilmore, Lewis and Clark County, as Vice Chair.***

and Charlie Gilmore, Lewis and Clark County, as Vice Chair. Kerry O'Connell will be formally appointed to the position at the next IM Project Directors meeting.

After hearing Dale Osborne's Encryption Sub-Committee report, members passed a motion to postpone the transition to NIST-certified encryption keys to Sept. 1, 2012. In related discussion, members approved a formal recommendation to include OTAR (Over-The-Air-Rekeying) as a feature when purchasing new subscriber units, because it is more cost effective to do so and it is a beneficial tool.

Roger Smith, IM Radio System Administrator, gave an extensive Network Sub-Committee report. Northern Tier microwave hops are being evaluated as part of the 60-day acceptance testing and T-1 tests are continuing. Site walks for the Greeno and Coburn sites were completed, and the sites will be turned over to the county soon. Site walks for the XL Heights and Lost Creek sites are planned for next week. Roger has been compiling manuals containing vital information about IM sites, including maintenance checklists; as-built documentation; shelter specifications; and tower, antenna and alarm diagrams. Members discussed the importance of maintaining up-to-date inventory lists of equipment at each site and updating user agreements.

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All firmware upgrades have been delivered along the Northern Tier. As sites are added, code plugs will need to be updated. Roger indicated that local jurisdictions need to have an individual available who can make slight programming modifications to radios. Charlie Gilmore and Julia Noland, PSSB, reported on alarm notifications and filters that are being built. Brian Sewell, IM Project Manager said that progress is being made on the room where the Eastern Master Zone Controller will be located in the Richland County Law and Justice Center. Work on the HVAC is under contract, and racks have been installed. He also reviewed connectivity to the site.

Members listened to a presentation about Exalt Communications' point-to-point microwave equipment and learned about last-mile hop solutions. Issues such as monitoring using ProVision software, proper frequency licensing, contracting, and path planning services also were discussed. Each member then gave an update on radio activities within their regions.

The next IMTC meeting is scheduled for Mon., Feb. 28, in the MT Dept. of Transportation Auditorium West, 2701 Prospect Ave., Helena.

## D Block Legislation Reintroduced

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

Senator Rockefeller (D-W. Va.), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, reintroduced the Public Safety Spectrum and Wireless Innovation Act (S. 28) on Jan. 25. The bill is identical to last year's S. 3756, which proposed the reallocation of the 700 MHz D block of broadband spectrum to public safety. It also establishes a framework for the development of a nationwide interoperable public safety network.

In addition, the bill provides funding for construction and maintenance of the network by authorizing the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to conduct incentive auctions

whereby current spectrum licensees would voluntarily give up spectrum in exchange for a portion of the proceeds of a commercial auction.

In a meeting with public safety leaders, the Obama administration announced its plans to support legislation for reallocating the D block and using \$10-13 billion dollars from incentive auctions to construct the network. The public safety broadband network was mentioned briefly in the President's State of the Union address this week. According to the National Governor's Association, the Administration plans to provide more details after the release of the President's FY 2012 budget. In a related development, the FCC yesterday voted unanimously to adopt an order and further notice of proposed rulemaking in the development of interoperability requirements, including using long-term evolution (LTE) wireless broadband technology as a common interface.

## Upcoming Meetings

### • Mon., Feb. 14

IM Finance Committee (IMFC)

Helena • 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.

### • Mon., Feb. 14

IM Governance Committee (IMGC)

Helena • 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.

### • Tues., Feb. 15

IM Project Directors Meeting (IMPD)

Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Location to Be Announced

### • Thurs., Feb. 17

Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Consortium

Billings • 9:00 am - noon

Detention Facility, 3165 King Ave East

### • Thurs., Feb. 17

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium

Butte • 10:00 am - noon

Butte Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George Street